

News Release

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The Gillette Company, The Nature Conservancy, United Nations Foundation Announce Partnership to Restore Wetlands

Partnership's Inaugural Project Provides \$750, 000 to Protect Yucatan's Sian Ka'an World Heritage Site

(March 22, 2004) Miami, Florida—The Gillette Company, The Nature Conservancy and the United Nations Foundation, meeting at the *White Water to Blue Water* partnership conference, today announced the launch of the International Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership (ICWRP), an innovative private-public initiative to restore wetlands and other aquatic habitats around the world. Through ICWRP, The Nature Conservancy, Gillette and the UN Foundation are providing \$750,000 for the partnership's inaugural project to conserve freshwater, marine and coastal resources in and around Mexico's Sian Ka'an World Heritage/Ramsar site, a wetland of vital importance located just south of Cancun.

"We are committed to supporting the communities in which we do business and our business is truly global in nature. We are delighted to extend our environmental stewardship activities that we began in Massachusetts onto an international platform," said Royall Mack, Sr., Vice President, The Gillette Company.

The ICWRP partnership --- a combined effort of several partners, including The Gillette Company, the United Nations Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and Coastal America --- will engage the private sector and develop cohesive partnerships that join technical, financial, and administrative resources to help reverse the disappearance of wetlands. Wetlands are vital habitats that are shrinking the world over. For example, 200 years ago the United States had twice the acreage of wetlands that it has today, now estimated at around 100 million acres.

Its inaugural project seeks to protect Sian Ka'an's critical coastal habitats and ensure the viability of the region's freshwater and marine systems. Coastal development, unregulated tourism, and unsustainable farming and fishing practices threaten Sian Ka'an. The project is being implemented by the Mexican environmental organization Amigos de Sian Ka'an.

"We are pleased that Sian Ka'an, Mexico is the first project in the ICWRP partnership," said Lynne Hale, Director of the Marine Initiative for The Nature Conservancy. "This funding enables The Nature Conservancy to continue our conservation efforts with the local conservation group, Amigos de Sian Ka'an, to protect this critically important and beautiful place."

"This partnership gives a diverse group of organizations the ability to work together to preserve our world's natural treasures. We are proud to be part of this project helping to protect a UN World Heritage Site in Sian Ka'an," said Kathy Bushkin, Executive Vice President of the United Nations Foundation.

The ICWRP Partnership will follow a two-pronged approach, based on the size of projects that are developed. Large-scale projects will be implemented at World Heritage sites, for which the UN Foundation will provide matching resources to private investment. Small-scale projects will be addressed through a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Coastal America Foundation and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, utilizing the Convention's existing project selection framework.

"This collaboration among government, non-profit organizations and business represents the Bush Administration's new way of doing business in the developing world in order to fight poverty and bring hope to peoples' lives," said John F. Turner, Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs and a principal of Coastal America. "Through partnerships we can promote environmental stewardship, spur economic growth, and encourage social development in order to expand the circle of development. Coastal America is proud to be a member of this new partnership that will make real progress in the fight to preserve the world's wetlands."

"Through this ground-breaking international partnership we will be able to consolidate the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage site by implementing tools such as easements and promoting best practices for wastewater management contributing to the conservation of the region's wetlands, freshwater springs and coastal lagoons," said Marco Lazcano, Executive Director of Amigos de Sian Ka'an.

The partnership was announced in conjunction with the week-long *White Water to Blue Water* Partnership Conference. The Conference brings together representatives from 31 countries of the Wider Caribbean region and other coastal nations, the travel and tourism industry, academia, international organizations, the private sector and environmental groups to forge partnerships that safeguard the Caribbean's marine and coastal ecosystems.

Further information about ICWRP is available on the Partnership website: http://www.icwrp.org.

The Gillette Company, headquartered in Boston, Mass., is the world leader in male grooming, a category that includes blades, razors and shaving preparations. Gillette also holds the number one position worldwide in selected female grooming products, such as wet shaving products and hair epilation devices. In addition, the Company is the world leader in alkaline batteries and in manual and power toothbrushes.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international, nonprofit organization that preserves plants, animals and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 15 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 102 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.

The United Nations Foundation was created in 1998 with businessman and philanthropist R.E. Turner's historic gift to support UN causes. The United Nations Foundation promotes a more peaceful, prosperous, and just world through the support of the United Nations and its Charter. Through its grant-making and by building new and innovative public-private partnerships, the United Nations Foundation acts to meet the most pressing health, humanitarian, socioeconomic, and environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Coastal America is a partnership among federal, state and local governments and private alliances to address environmental problems along our nation's coasts. The federal partners are: Departments of Agriculture, Air Force, Army, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Navy, State, Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency and the Executive Office of the President.